

How can YOU help protect your water?

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Many people still think that water pollution comes from a specific source---called 'point source' pollution---like factories or sewage treatment plants---but the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that now **NPS--nonpoint source pollution--is the single biggest factor affecting water quality today.**

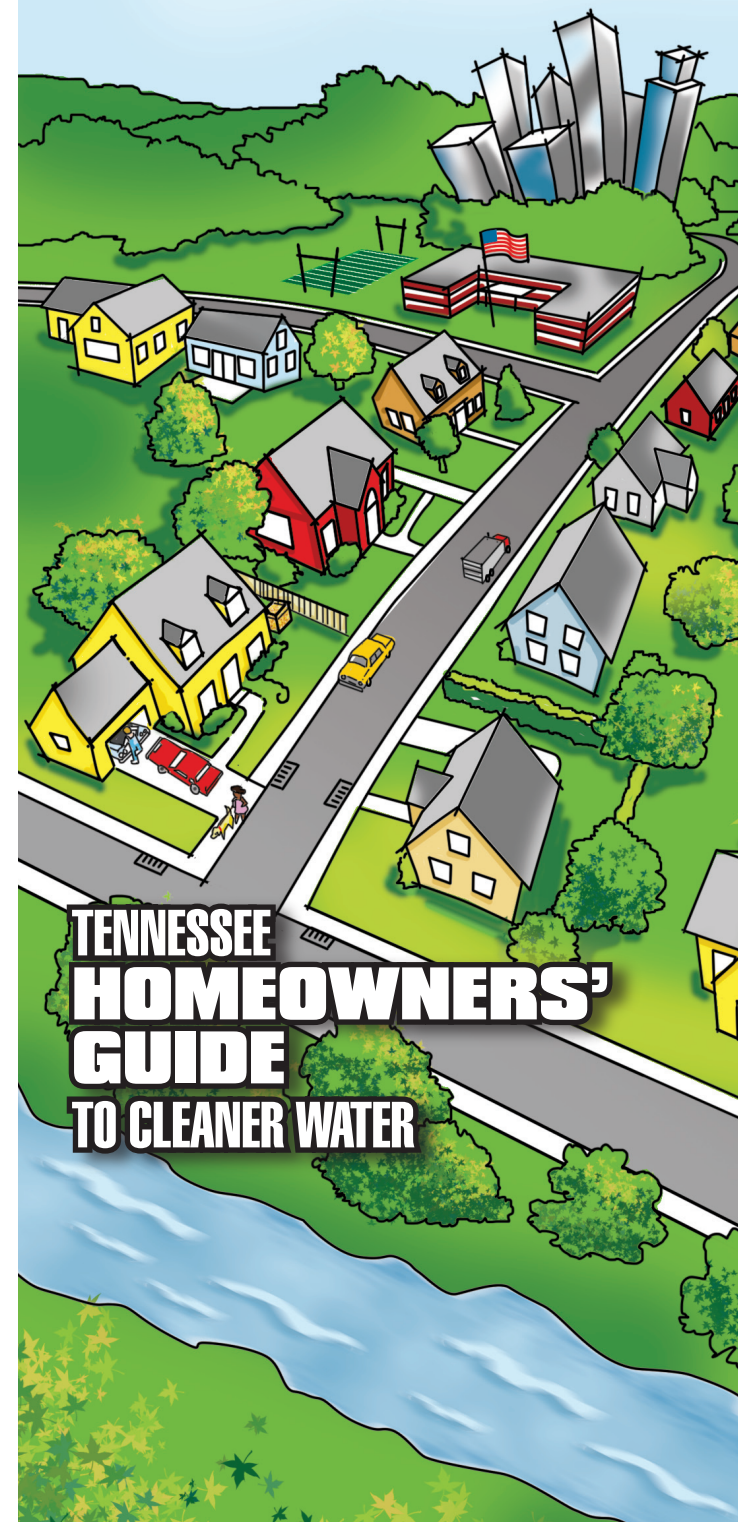
"Nonpoint source pollution" (NPS) occurs when water from storms picks up pollutants and deposits them away from the source of the pollution. This runoff finds its way into water sources, through storm drains or directly into streams, from which much of our drinking water comes. Typical nonpoint source pollutants in suburban areas are

- Household chemicals
- Yard waste
- Trash
- Salt and sand
- Excess nutrients (including lawn fertilizers, septic systems and pet wastes)
- Pesticides
- Cleaning agents
- Grease
- Auto products

The cost of this type of pollution is reflected in higher water bills, as drinking water coming from increasingly polluted sources is more expensive to treat.

What can you do? **Look inside for helpful hints.**

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Have your septic tank pumped and septic system inspected regularly.

Check car for leaks and recycle used motor oil. Never pour it on the ground or into a storm drain.

Minimize pesticides; learn about Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Compost yard wastes—leaves and grass. Don't dump them in ditches or waterways.

Direct downspouts onto lawns and away from paved surfaces.

Plant grass or plants on the bare spots in your yard.

Follow directions on fertilizer labels and sweep off driveways, sidewalks, and roads so that the chemicals won't get into storm drains.

Pick up after your pet. Don't let pet waste wash into storm drains.

NEVER pour any kind of waste into storm drains.

Clean water begins at home...
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